



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 5, 2012

No. 35

## House of Representatives

The House met at 12 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
March 5, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF DENHAM to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

### PRESIDENT PUTIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to extend congratulations to Vladimir Putin for his election to become President of Russia. We saw the reports yesterday. There were nearly 100,000 Web cams that followed the voting stations all across Russia, and even though there have been reports from the Organization For Security and Cooperation in Europe of voting violations, we are where we are. Vladimir Putin is going to be the next President of Russia.

I believe that, in light of that fact, it's important for President Putin to recognize that, contrary to what he said in his acceptance speech last night, we do not want to destroy Russia. I believe that it is very important that we take every step that we can to encourage a strong, vibrant, growing, independent, democratic Russia. I'm not going to, as President Putin said last night, dictate from the West what he should do, but I do think that those of us, like the United States of America, a country that has had a 223-year history of democracy, could provide a little bit of advice to a country that is just now beginning to enter its third decade of democracy and obviously has had more than a few challenges.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that if we look at some of the recommendations, the economists last week pointed to some very positive steps that could allow President Putin to, rather than repressing the opposition that he faces, embrace it. Now, what could he do?

First, he could announce that this 6-year term will be his last term, that he will not run again as President of Russia.

Second, it would be very important in light of all of the controversy that took place following last December's parliamentary elections for him to call new parliamentary elections so we could have a greater degree of transparency and accountability.

Third, as we look at the prospect of provincial elections, what are tantamount to governorships, having those elections being free and fair would be a very positive thing.

Additionally, I was very glad to hear the news this morning from current President Dmitry Medvedev about the prospect of releasing my friend who sat with me on numerous occasions here in the Capitol, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who was the head of Yukos Oil, one of the great energy companies in the world, and was a great philanthropist

in the country, and was guilty of one thing and one thing only, that being opposing Vladimir Putin. The prospect of his release would be a very welcome sign.

I also think, Mr. Speaker, that as we look at the prospect of the appointment of a new prime minister, there are names that have been thrown out there. Alexei Kudrin, who formerly served as finance minister, would be someone who would be very welcome in light of the fact that he has actually engaged the protesters.

So, Mr. Speaker, I throw these proposals out simply because I believe that we need to have a strong, vibrant, growing Russia. We need to recognize that those countries that are formerly part of the Soviet Union should also have an opportunity to be strong, vibrant, democratic, and independent without facing repression.

I do also believe, Mr. Speaker, that as we look at the debate that we're going to face here, that bringing Russia into a rules-based trading system by seeing them join the World Trade Organization would be a very positive thing as we pursue our shared goals.

So, again, as we look forward to the important relationship between Russia and the United States of America, I wish President-elect Putin hearty congratulations.

### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM) at 2 p.m.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H1137